



Join Us for Free, Fun, Programs!

Parker River National Wildlife Refuge

February, 2014

REGISTRATION

All refuge run programs are FREE but space may be limited and advanced registration is required for all programs, unless otherwise indicated. Please call (978) 465-5753. Registration is not complete until you receive confirmation from a staff member. Please note that outdoor programs may be cancelled if there is inclement weather and also insufficient registration. Visit us on the web for more information: http://www.fws.gov/refuge/parker_river/ or call Refuge Headquarters. The refuge visitor center is located at 6 Plum Island Turnpike, Newburyport, MA. **Please note: If a program requires pre-registration, your registration is not confirmed unless and until you receive a phone call or voice mail message from a member of the refuge staff.**

“Up Close and Personal” Refuge Tour

Held on the following days: Saturday, February 1st @9:30 am; Sunday, February 2nd @ 1:00 pm; Wednesday, February 5th @ 1:00 pm; Sunday, February 9th @ 1:00 pm; Monday, February 10th @ 1:00 pm; Saturday, February 15th @ 9:30 am; Sunday, February 16th @ 1:00 pm; Friday, February 21st @9:30 am; Saturday, February 22nd @ 9:30 am; Sunday, February 23rd @ 1:00 pm; and Friday, February 28th @9:30 am.

Join a refuge ranger for an “up close and personal” tour of the Parker River National Wildlife Refuge. The tour will be conducted via refuge van, with several brief “drive by” stops along the way. The tour will provide an “insider’s” perspective of the refuge through the multiple lenses of the cultural history of Plum Island and the Great Marsh, native wildlife and their habitats, and the role of refuge management in the conservation of these precious natural resources. This guided two hour program is most appropriate for older teens and adults. Binoculars and/or a camera are recommended, but not required. Meet the ranger in the lobby of the Refuge visitor center 15 minutes prior to the program start time. Each session is limited to 10 participants; no more than 4 individuals per sign-up. Again, this is a vehicle-based tour, with limited stops on the Refuge.

Advance registration is required for this program, as enrollment is limited. Be advised that individual tours may be subject to cancellation. *Please note: Those who call and leave messages after hours, your registration is not confirmed until you receive a confirmation call from a Refuge staff member. Please call (978) 465-5753; to register for this program.

Making Tracks: Learning to Read Wildlife Clues

Sunday, February 2nd, 10:00 – 11:30 am & Saturday, February 15, 2:00 – 3:30 pm

If you have ever seen tracks in the snow, sand, or soil and were curious about what made them, then this is the program for you! Refuge staff will lead you through the basics of identifying common animals through the clues that they leave behind. A brief introduction to animal tracks and sign in the visitor contact station will be followed by time spent outdoors on the Refuge where we will look for tracks and attempt to determine their owner’s identity. This is a program for

beginners, so parents are encouraged to bring their children 10 and older. Please dress appropriately for cold and damp weather. Meet the ranger at the visitor contact station (located on the Refuge at Lot 1) ten minutes prior to the program start time. **Preregistration is required as the program is limited to 10 participants.**

Merrimack River Eagle Festival

Saturday, February 8th from 10:00 am – 3:00 pm

Once again the refuge is partnering with the Massachusetts Audubon Society at Joppa Flats to celebrate the local presence of wintering American bald eagles. The refuge visitor center will host a variety of fun, hands-on activities that include making an eagle magnet, dissecting owl pellets, and creating a colorful eagle habitat mural (that will later be featured on the refuge's web site!). In addition to these fun activities, visitors will be able to view two live owls from Drumlin Farm. Finally, at 1:30 pm, and in conjunction with the refuge's Photographic Society, talented wildlife photographer Shawn Carey will wow everyone with his amazing images of Massachusetts wildlife in our auditorium. Everything is FREE! **Preregistration is NOT required for Eagle Fest activities.** An event flyer is available online here:

<http://www.fws.gov/uploadedFiles/eaglefest%20flyer.pdf>.

The Photographic Society of Parker River National Wildlife Refuge

Next Meeting: Saturday, February 8th at 1:30 pm in the visitor center auditorium

Attend our next Photo Society meeting and witness the spectacular wildlife images of wildlife photographer Shawn Carey (of Migration Productions). Here are the specific details of Shawn's planned program:

Photographing Birds and other Wildlife in Massachusetts: "Where, When and How"

Photographing birds and other wildlife has become increasingly popular over the last ten years with the vast improvements in digital technology. More people than even are now experiencing the joys of photographing birds, mammals, insects and other natural history subjects every day. With that is the understanding there are many challenges that need to be better understood. The "Where", "When" and "How" being top of the list. For this program I will speak to these topics as well as the equipment needed (camera, computer and software) and tricks of the trade. To illustrate this we will look at three Mass Audubon properties (Visual Arts Center, Daniel Webster and Wellfleet Bay), all of which have observation blinds or photo blinds to assist in seeing and photographing birds and other wildlife. All of this along with hopefully some interesting stories and lots of give and take with the audience should provide for a lively gathering.

The Photographic Society welcomes anyone who has an interest in nature, wildlife, and/or photography – whether you are a total novice or earn a living by taking pictures! The club meets every month, generally on the second Saturday afternoon. Club activities include special presentations, slide shows (of members' work), intra-club mentoring and training, photo shoots, on-line photo sharing, and involvement in the refuge's various photography-related programs, events, and outreach activities. **Preregistration is NOT required to attend this program.** Please call (978) 465-5753 for more information about the Photographic Society.